



In the context of the 7th Africa Agriculture Science Week and FARA General Assembly, the Integrated Breeding Platform (IBP) hopes to have you participate in an engaging side event:

## Accessing the digital revolution to support the modernisation of plant breeding in Africa

**June 13<sup>th</sup> 2016, 2:45pm – 5:30pm\***  
**Kigali Conference Room**

*\*please confirm time and location with general schedule on site*



**Kigali, Rwanda, 13-16 June 2016**

# Session Agenda

**Introduction: Accessing the digital revolution to support the modernisation of plant breeding in Africa**

— Dr Jean-Marcel Ribaut, *IBP Director*

**Modernising rice breeding in Africa: challenges and opportunities**

— Dr Harold Roy-Macauley,  
General Director, AfricaRice

**Modernising plant breeding: a regional perspective**

— Dr Abdourahmane Sangare,  
Biotechnology and Biosafety Programme Manager, CORAF/WE CARD

**Implementing institutional change**

— Dr Elliot Tembo, Group Breeding Systems Manager / West Africa Research and Development Lead, SeedCo Ltd.

**Testimonials from practitioners**

**Open discussion**



# Thematic

Innovation in plant breeding is imperative to meet the growing demand for food and feed due to global challenges such as population growth and climate change. We need to produce more quantity and higher quality from agricultural production, and plant breeders are at the forefront of this food revolution in Africa.

The right tools, applied within effective programmes and partnerships, makes for a powerful combination – one with the potential to bring about a **digital revolution**. Its effects will be felt all along the delivery chain – from modern crop information management systems to improved communication between actors, reducing cost of the business and improving the quality of data for decision-making – making a real difference to food security.





This is radically important. Improving agricultural productivity is a goal shared by all stakeholders across Africa, and aligns with policies defined by global actors such as the African Union, the United Nations, the African Development Bank, the World Bank, CGIAR and many more. These global actors have identified clear areas as key to reaching that common goal:

- increasing the yearly rate of genetic gain,
- increasing research efficiency by establishing best practices,
- modernising national crop improvement institutions and their breeding programmes
- providing networks and local services to accompany would-be users in taking up new platforms and practices.

Key drivers of this revolution will be: increasing the rate of genetic gain in crop improvement; improving research efficiency by establishing best practices; modernising national crop improvement institutions and their breeding programmes; and providing networks and local services to support new platforms and methods.

The impact will be felt at the individual level (development, adoption and distribution) and institutional level (institutionalisation of knowledge management, synergy across users and teams). In turn, this will result in community benefits, including a larger-scale impact on regional economies and food security mechanisms.

In this side event, experts from the Integrated Breeding Platform (IBP) and key partners will show how moving into the digital era has the potential to significantly increase crop data management efficiency, as well as the documentation and quality of improved seeds. The IBP also offers tools and services to empower breeders, accelerate the production of improved cultivars adapted to local environments, and build strong regional networks for capacity development.



# IBP: an entry point into the digital revolution

For the first time, breeders have access through a single platform to a broad scope of knowledge and applications to conduct their routine activities, and produce improved cultivars and seeds faster and at lower cost.

Our core product, the Breeding Management System (BMS), accelerates the production of improved varieties by saving time and money, enabling the adoption of new strategies to maximise breeding efficiency and improve quality.

Moving into the digital era will significantly increase crop data management efficiency (quality, storage and exchange) as well as the documentation and quality of improved seeds, facilitating their transfer and effective use by extension services to reach farmers' fields.

The need is to scale up this effort by empowering National Programmes and SMEs in Africa to use the BMS to its full potential. To that effect, capacity development and network building is at the heart of IBP strategy. The sustainable deployment of the BMS is ensured by IBP Regional Hubs in Africa at AfricaRice, IITA, CERAAS and BecA. Those Hubs make good use of established relationships among local users and institutes to further promote and disseminate IBP best practices and to provide a responsive support to local users.



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